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NID 85-026 JX

PAKISTAN-INDIA:

Decision To Try Hijackers

Indian Prime Minister Gandhi's positive, public response to Pakistani President Zia's decision to try 14 Sikhs for hijacking Indian airliners, probably will lead to resumption of high-level talks between New Delhi and Islamabad.

Comment: Zia earlier had resisted a trial, fearing that it would be unpopular. His decision to go ahead with it before Pakistani elections late this month is the most recent of several bold political moves on his part. He recently held a referendum on his rule and eased restrictions on opposition candidates in the coming election.

Zia probably hopes the talks next week between the Indian and Pakistani Foreign Secretaries at the South Asia Regional Conference in the Maldives will result in more substantive discussions. New Delhi, however, probably will seek assurances from Islamabad that it will not aid Sikh extremists before serious political negotiations begin.

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1 February 1985